

STENOGRAPHIC NOTES OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN DCI AND HARRISON
SALISBURY WITH MR. AMORY AND COL. GROGAN ON 23 OCTOBER 1957

- S- "...and they said they had been meeting American writers in an effort to discover wherein lay the strength and vigor of American writing. They felt in reading particularly Saroyan, Hemingway and Falkner that the strength of the American writers came from the fact that the American writers permitted all sorts of influences including abstract influences, idealistic influences and things like that to impinge on their work. They drew their strength from all of these sources. The American writer also had to fight for the attention of the reader. He didn't have a captive audience, therefore, his writing had to have impact if it was coming through. And this was precisely what their writing lacked because they were trying to fit it to a formula and it had no impact on the reader. They said that they felt that the future belonged to the American method rather than the Russian."
- D- "That is very interesting."
- S- "This struck me as being very fundamental and as big a shift as we can expect."
- D- "They get all the American books there they want, do they?"
- S- "They do. And I thought this was interesting, what do they think about people like Kaffka, for example, and (Wilke) and

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people like that. So I tossed those names in and instead of their shuddering with horror, it turned out that two or three of them were great fans of Kaffka and they are now bringing out one of the Kaffka books, I believe it is THE TRIAL going to be published for the first time in Czechoslovakia. It is on the presses now. I said, 'Now, what about this. I mean, this is not the sort of thing that I thought you people liked.' And they said, 'Well, we don't personally agree with Kaffka's philosophy but we think it is very important and we think that people will study and read Kaffka through the ages. We don't think Kaffka has roots in the soil but we think he has a great contribution, you see.' Well, here again is a something that you could never expect to hear in Russia; and, in fact, if these words were reported over in the Soviet Union, I'm sure it would bring denunciation down on these Czechs for saying it. So that indicates quite a shift in position without any advertisement, with everything just going quietly ahead and doing it. These are not unofficial writers, either. These are the Communist writers, the Secretary of the Writers Union was there, the head of the biggest publishing house was there. He is the fellow who is publishing Kaffka and that sort of thing. So that sort of indicates that in a quiet way, there is more going on there in Prague than one might expect. But how much more, I can't say because I had

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only three days there and this was the only really significant conversation I had. When I talked to the newspaper people, we were just mostly just talking shop like a bunch of newspaper men might do. We didn't get into politics, hardly at all, so I couldn't say very much about it. I will say this that when I reported these conversations back to Mr. Johnson and to people in the Embassy they were extremely surprised because they didn't realize that this sort of thing was going on. In fact, they--."

D- "...Alexis Johnson is one of the best fellows we have but it is very hard for our ambassadors to these countries to get down and talk to the people."

S- "It is darned hard and I had a long talk with him. And I think he is doing an awfully good job. I think he has a very supple mind and just the sort of mind that you need in a place like that. He now has, however, a young fellow in there who is able to get around and who is making it his business to get around and circulate among the writers and students. And I think that we'll begin to get--."

D- "Who is that? Do you remember his name?"

S- "Just a minute. I have it written down here someplace. He had him brought over especially for that particular purpose. Art Hoffman, his name is. I think he has been there only a few months but he is a man who has the Czech

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language and who did a lot of studying over here before he came over to Prague and he should be a lot of help there."

A- "That you've got to have. You can't fool around with it unless you are bilingual in the language and even then you've got plenty of hurdles."

S- "Well, I was pleased to see that now in Rumania we have a young man also well qualified, a man named Ed Seigel who gets out around the country, spends an awfully lot of his time traveling around Rumania and knows a surprising amount about what goes on and has an awful lot of contacts with the people. You need that particularly in these countries."

D- "In Hungary, I suppose, we can't do very much."

S- "Well, I was amazed to find there Tom Rogers. He has been the First Secretary, I guess he has been there four years now. He will be leaving I think in November. He has an enormous number of Hungarian contacts and friends who still come to his house. He and his wife, who I think is particularly well qualified because she is a former Washington newspaper girl and has a lot of interest in this sort of thing. We sat around one evening talking about this thing and they figured out that in the last six months, they have made ten new Hungarian friends who have been at their house or who would be delighted to come if they had the chance to invite them. I think that is pretty good under the sort of situation you have there in Hungary. And it shows what can be done with a positive approach and somebody who

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is really interested in getting in there to do that sort of thing. I found he knew a hell of a lot more about Hungary than I expected any diplomat to know."

G- "What's her name? What's the wife's name?"

S- "I have forgotten what her name is."

D- "Did you see Mindzenty or not?"

S- "I just passed him in the corridor."

D- "I imagine it is better not."

S- "Well, no. They didn't want me to see him so I didn't press the matter at all. He's a kind of a problem child."

D- "How did the satellite--I suppose they all size up differently. Did you get any general or specific impressions in--."

S- "It is hard to generalize, even dangerous to generalize. I would split them basically into two groups, the groups where anti-Russian feeling is extremely strong and perhaps is a dominant thing. And that is Poland and Hungary. Rumania comes almost as close to that so far as the general population is concerned. They are extremely anti-Russian, much more than I expected to find; but in a typical Rumanian way, this doesn't come or add up to anything. I mean, they are against the Russians but they are not going to do anything about it."

D- "No blood is going to be shed there."

S- "No, Sir. I should say not. But they wish somebody else

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would do something."

D- "They would like to have us or the Hungarians."

S- "They'd cheer us, you know. They would be on our side, but they are'nt going to do anything."

A- "I was talking to a fellow who has just come back from being Military Attache in Bucharest and he said the nostalgic feeling for the Nazis, everywhere you go, the Nazis now they're ten years past, the Nazis now can do no wrong. They were wonderful people. They were polite and courteous on the streets."

S- "I could believe that."

A- "So on and so forth. Give them back a good (yulen) colonel again."

S- "I had a young kid from the Foreign Office there who was assigned to me to be my interpreter for various things they set up. This youngster had gotten through the language school in June, a very nice boy, very Western in his outlook. He was perfectly delighted with his job in the Foreign Office because it enabled him to read the New York Times every day and he got TIME magazine and LIFE magazine and this was his great delight. He kept telling me all sorts of things I didn't know about Hollywood movie stars and things of that kind. Now, this youngster who I think is fairly typical of the coming generation is so anti-Russian

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that I delighted in discussing Russia with him just to see his reactions. He couldn't say anything good about the Russians. He literally couldn't. And it annoyed the hell out of him when I would make a fairly approving remark about this is a smart thing the Russians did. He would immediately think about some bad thing that they had done to tell me. I met a group of twenty youngsters, this was another thing. I tried to meet in each country a bunch of the youngsters in the universities to see what they were thinking about. So school hadn't started yet, but they gathered together twenty kids who were all young Communists in the Youth House with their young Communist leader. We sat around one evening and these kids talked extremely freely in spite of the fact-- in fact, their Communist leader joined in this discussion-- and it became apparent within two or three minutes that they were all very pro-American. I asked them. I went around the room just for fun to ask them who their favorite author was. Let me see, there would be twenty authors and fifteen of the authors were Western. There were three Rumanians and two Russians, neither of whom were Soviet Russians. One was Checkov and one was Tolstoy. I went around again to see what languages they were studying and there was only one in the group who was studying Russian. I expressed surprise at this and they said, 'Oh, but Russian isn't compulsory anymore so we all dropped it.' This is in Bucharest."

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- A- "Young Communists, hum. Maybe IO Division would want its own Young Communists."
- D- "Are they studying English? What are they studying?"
- S- "Yeah, English. English is their favorite language. I asked them where they would like to go to school. They would all like to go to the United States, or Paris. Some of them would like to go to Paris. A few to Russia. This was in complete contrast to Albania, for example, which is extremely primitive."
- D- "What about the radio, VOA and Radio Free Europe and so on?"
- S- "You get varied pattern there on VOA and Radio Free Europe. In Hungary, I'm sorry to say, we've got a bad problem with Radio Free Europe. I don't know what can be done about it but the Hungarians I talked to and I talked to a fairly broad cross section are very bitter about it. This is psychological and more of a problem, I am sure. But it doesn't do any good to argue with them about it. They blame Radio Free Europe for letting them down. And they blame us for letting them down. And you say, 'Why?' And they say, 'Radio Free Europe led us to expect help.' And you can't say, 'Well, they didn't do that,' because they say, 'Well, that's what it sounded like to us.' So there you are. The other place that I

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felt that our radio propaganda had done us harm, and I don't know enough about the details so I may be making a big mistake on it, is Albania where it seems quite obvious that the regime and the Russians had successfully identified us with the (Zog) regime and all kinds of old elements who certainly are not well-liked in Albania at the present time, and they convinced the Albanians that we are behind all the bad things you can think of in Albania. Now, what role in this our propaganda has played in this, I don't know but it certainly hasn't been effective."

D- "I don't think we have gotten very much radio into Albania."

A- "I haven't the slightest idea how many hours or minutes we push--."

S- "I just don't know. I haven't the faintest notion. I know nothing about Albania, but I found the Albanians very--."

D- "Do they listen to the radio there very much?"

S- "Apparently, they hear a good deal of radio, yes. In general, the one thing which everybody liked and everybody listens to is the VOA's musical program, the orchestra or jazz program. I think they call it Music, USA or something like that. This is generally listened to. Everybody likes it. So far as news is concerned, I still think that BBC has a better reception and appeal throughout the area

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than the VOA. Although, I wouldn't be too sure about that. Now in Hungary, some of the people in the Embassy said that they thought that the peasants liked the hard line of RFE. They liked to hear it get in there and slug at Kadar and so forth. My impression was that the city people, however, just pass them by. They were not interested in that at all. In general, I felt that the ingredient which was rather lacking in our radio pitch and which should be there was the American ingredient. We don't sell the United States the way we should. The United States is terribly popular in all these areas, everything American is popular. When we go into the emigre side and use a certain amount of endeavor on that, some of the resentment against the emigres comes off on us. But there is no resentment against the United States. I didn't find that in any of the countries again except in -- where there is a special situation as in Hungary, which is the result of a year ago and Albania where, as I say, their propaganda has been successful. But in Bulgaria and Rumania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, very warm feeling toward us. I think there is room for a lot more."

D- "Lot more radio, you mean?"

S- "I think we could do more radio as long as it is American radio, as long as it doesn't have to do with internal

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politics or emigre politics or arguing with the regime over some particular thing. They probably know more about that than we do. I think that we have a lot of friends there in that area. I think we could do more in the whole area generally and strengthen these contacts."

D- "What would you do? That is very interesting. Would you have more contacts, more people going in?"

S- "I'd have lots more people going in. I'd have lots more of these people coming over here. This is the dream and delight of most of these people, the opportunity to come to this country or to come to the West, even to come to Western Europe. And they like having us come in there and they like to see Americans and I would encourage our diplomatic personnel to have much more contact with the locals than they do have. There is a tendency on the part of many, many of our people to say you can't do it. It is impossible. But you can do it and in almost every one of these countries you will find one fellow who is doing it. Which is the answer to that. I was surprised, for instance, in Bulgaria. I think personally, we ought to have relations with Bulgaria."

D- "I do, too."

S- "There is a young man in the British Legation there who has fantastic contacts with the Bulgarians. He has all kinds of Bulgarian friends. And he literally knows everything

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that is going on in the country. He is wonderful and we could do the same thing. There is no question about it. The Russians are not popular in any of those places."

A- "Not even in Bulgaria?"

S- "Not in Bulgaria. They have been too long in Bulgaria. They have overstayed their welcome. It isn't as sharp thing in Bulgaria as it is over in Hungary or in Poland but it still builds up. It constantly builds up. It just--."

D- "Are they much in evidence in Bulgaria? They haven't got any troops, have they?"

S- "No, they are not in evidence but they have left something which is an eyesore to every Bulgarian and something which all Bulgarians can unite in hating and this is the replica of Gorky Street which they have built right in the center of Sofia. In every one of these countries, they have put some gruesome monument to Stalinist architecture right out in public and everybody hates it. It's like the Poles who stand around and look at this Palace of Culture and wonder if they could perhaps cut off the top of it or maybe trim the sides down and make it look a little better, you know. And this is a focal point for suppressed feelings in every one of these countries."

G- "This was out in Vienna, too? They do that in Vienna, too, in Stalinplatz."

D- "Have they changed most of the Stalin names back. They've

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left Stalin in the satellites, haven't they?"

S- "Well, he has vanished like in Bulgaria. He has vanished from (Voitsvarna) again instead of Stalin. It is a port. In Budapest, Stalin Square has vanished and it is not going to come back again. That's for sure. Even in--."

D- "What is Stalin Square now? Gone back to its old name?"

S- "There isn't any name on it at the present time. Somebody told me it had been given a name like Constitution Square. Oh, it was given the name of Hungarian Youth or something like that and then they felt that this was unsuitable because it might have memories of a year ago and they changed it again to something else. They changed it twice and the last name I have forgotten. But even in Tirane where people show the least embarrassment about Stalin, the youngster who was my guide from the Foreign Office, I asked him the name of the principle boulevard of the city not realizing that it was bound to be Stalin and he was flustered and said, 'Oh, this is Albania Boulevard, Free Albania Boulevard.' The way he said this puzzled me a little bit and I went around the next day and looked at the street signs and it is Stalin Boulevard."

G- "But he didn't want to admit it."

S- "He didn't want to mention that, yeah."

D- "Now, you are going to write on each one of the satellites?"

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S- "No, I've written all on the individual countries that I'm going to in the reporting I did from over there. I've been running this week a generalized series of impressions on the trip as a whole. That will come to an end Friday and that will be the end of it."

A- "No book then."

S- "I don't think so, no."

D- "Have you any general ideas on--you have given us ideas about exchanges and people and so forth. I fully agree. I agree about Bulgaria. There are problems there. Their congress is kind of--there is a problem there. And then the Hungarian thing came along and was hard. They rather want to do it."

S- "Yes, they have made it very plain and they want to do it."

D- "They want to do it and I think we ought to do that when we can. What's the future?"

S- "I think you have to have--."

D- "It looks as though Russia wasn't really going to conquer these countries. I mean the national feeling is going to still persist."

S- "It is. There is no doubt about that in my mind that if Russia could be moved away geographically from these countries, they would immediately leave Communism and come back to some, not perhaps to full scale capitalism. They

would probably keep Socialist industry and the big heavy industry but they would move back to a middle way. Now, how far they can move without arousing Russia's security fears, I don't know. I think the most interesting thing that is happening in that particular sphere is what Tito is doing at the present time. Now Tito is obviously trying to aggrandize himself in the whole area and he is also trying to create a bloc which will follow his leadership and which will be not under complete Russian dominance. Now, how much he can pull them over to a sort of twilight area between the two, I just don't know. But this, I think would be the first stage ambition of a man like Georg (Udej). I think George (Udej), for example, I think in his cautious way, he is working quite closely with Tito and would like to move away from the Russians. But he can't move very far. He knows damned well they would be on his tail if he moves very far. But with Tito's help, perhaps he can get over a little of this. This is what Gomulka would like to do. Gomulka's problem, I think, is basically one of internal stability. I'm not disturbed as some of our friends are over in Warsaw by the fact that Gomulka is cracking down a little bit. I think Gomulka has to crack down or his damned regime is going to crack up. Because it is an awfully shoddy structure.

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He hasn't got anything really to base himself on. He has got no Communist Party. The damned thing has just disintegrated like the ice at the end of the winter is just melted away. The Catholic Church is his biggest support when you come right down to it. Well, this is certainly not a very stable situation for a Communist leader to be depending on Cardinal Wyszynski."

D- "And the Catholic Church is only doing it to prevent the take-over of--."

S- "That's right. Wyszynski is a very smart man. He knows damned well that Gomulka is what stands between them and the Russians coming in. Gomulka knows it, too; but he naturally wants to strengthen his state, I think he has got to do it."

D- "We understand that. Why did Tito recognize East Germany? Did he miscalculate?"

S- "No, I don't think so. I think that again relates to the Polish situation. The Poles, the German thing is a nightmare to the Poles and they worry more about it than anything else. When I talked to (Serankavich) getting the interview and trying to get it on a broad basis, and I said, 'Now, what would you as a Pole advise the great powers to do. What single practical step could they do to increase chances for

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peace in the world?' He said, 'Well, the first thing that should be done is to recognize the Oderneiser Line.' Well, this is kind of funny but when you think of how it pops right into his mind, it gives you kind of an idea of how much they worry about this particular problem. And that's--."

D- "I heard today, I got it from a very good source, that the Tito recognition of East Germany was due to pressure from Gomulka and not from Khrushchev."

S- "Oh, I would swear it is that way. Because it fits into that picture. And this is something Tito could do for Gomulka or thought he could do. And I don't think he expected that the West Germans would pick him up on this thing. I don't know if that was such a good move for them to do but they have their own worries."

D- "They pretty near had to do it."

A- "I had lunch at the German Embassy today and they indicated it was a much closer debate, that the old man up to 48 hours said, 'Let's get another hold-down on it.' And they were very unhappy because after all, they planned to do it the other way. They planned after election to recognize Gomulka and he thought the timing was still a matter of argument. And then, of course, if Yugoslavia turned around, they couldn't possibly have broken it so the Easterners, I mean both of these two guys ... and they think the future of

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Germany lies as they say in these territories. It must be the instrument of Western policy. And it is getting a lot of ... nach austen ... with the winter snows again. And to hell with this money to India business. Why don't you lay off us? You spend the money on the India Five Year Plan, let us take care of Czechoslovakia and Poland. It's lovely and you can put yourself back in 1933 all over again."

D- "I've got to see some people here. I got in a jam with this meeting tomorrow. Can't you stay on and talk with Bob a minute? Have you got a minute, Bob?"

A- "Yes, Sir."

D- "I appreciate your coming down very much, I've read and I think your writings are really admirable, most helpful."

G- "He turned the stock market back today, you know. The Colonel said he was good, did some nice stories, and the market went up about six points."

A- "Fourteen points, biggest hike in a long time."

G- "Everything is back to normal again."

D- "Thank you very much."

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